The Wayback Machine - https://web.archive.org/web/20190409210201/http://taralyn...

Mother Raven

Lowrie used the feather and jumped out of the level boundaries. Drew's red turtle shell harmlessly shattered against the wall as the Lakitu brought Lowrie's kart back into the field of play. "Missed me!"

Drew scoffed, "There are only so many feathers! Your luck will run out."

The door to the backyard opened. Lowrie's father stepped inside. "Lowrie, pause your game. I need you out here for a moment."

"Out here" wasn't a phrase Lowrie liked to hear. It typically meant yard work. Lowrie reluctantly paused the game. "What is it, Dad?"

"Grab the broom and come outside with me."

"But Dad, me and my friend are playing right now."

Lowrie's dad grew stern. "Just get off your butt and grab the broom. I only need you for a few quick minutes."

Lowrie groaned a little but got up. He grabbed the broom from the kitchen and followed his dad outside. He doubted whatever his dad wanted him to do would only take "a few minutes". Anything his dad wanted him to do typically took longer.

Drew followed them outside. "What's going on?"

Lowrie's dad pointed at the big oak tree in their backyard. "Lowrie, up in that tree a raven has made a nest."

"So? Birds make their nests in that tree every year."

"Yeah, but we've never had a raven nest there."

"What's so bad about ravens?"

"Ravens are bullies, Lowrie. They don't like other birds and they aren't afraid of most other birds either. I've seen ravens fight with hawks before."

Lowrie and Drew both responded with typical 12-year-old interest. "Cool!"

Lowrie's dad chuckled at the two young boys' predictable interest in two birds duking it out. "Yeah. Cool. But hawks don't come to eat from our bird feeder. Sparrows and other small birds do. If we let the raven stay, they'll eat all the bird seed and the smaller birds won't get anything. I want you to climb up there, Lowrie, and knock down the raven's nest."

With youthful impatience the young boy asked, "Why can't you do it?" Lowrie's friend was over and it was a Saturday. Like most kids, he didn't see why he needed to do chores.

Lowrie's father grew impatient, but he restrained himself from yelling. "Quit worrying about your little video game. I need you to climb up because I'm too big. The branches would snap on me. Just climb up, knock out the nest, and you can go back to playing."

The reproof in his father's voice didn't miss Lowrie's ear. Work before play was a common axiom in his home. Not wishing to argue with his dad, and thereby incur more work, he nodded his head. "Okay, okay." Lowrie handed Drew the broom. "Hand that to me when I get up."

Drew watched Lowrie climb up the tree. As soon as he began his ascent, the raven began to squawk at him. Drew asked Lowrie's father, "Will the raven attack him as he's knocking their nest out?"

"Toss me the broom, Drew."

As the broom floated to Lowrie, his father answered. “No, it’ll just squawk at him. A raven is tough but it won’t attack something five times its own size.”

Hanging onto one of the stronger branches with his left hand, Lowrie caught the broom with his right. “Thanks Drew.” Lowrie began climbing further up the tree. As he neared, the raven abandoned the nest, squawking and cackling. It landed on the fence and started its protests anew, louder than ever.

Lowrie’s father left the yard. “I’m going to finish weeding the front flower beds.” He made sure to express appreciation to his son. “Thanks for the help Lowrie.”

Lowrie lifted the broom above his head and pushed against the nest. Absentmindedly he responded, “No probs.”

Sticks and leaves came loose as he pushed on the nest. Lowrie brushed the foliage out of his unkempt hair blond hair.

Drew shouted from the ground, “Got it yet?” as the raven grew louder.

Lowrie shook the nest with the tip of the broom. “Almost got it out.” Turning the broom around, he swatted at the nest with its bristles. The raven, perched on the fence, flapped its wings angrily.

“Got it!” The nest crashed to the lawn.

Drew bounded over to the nest and picked it up for examining. He had never seen a nest so close before. But as he held it, he felt something gooey run down his arm. “What the? Oh heck. Lowrie, there were some eggs in the nest.” Drew tossed it back to the ground.

“Really?” Lowrie peered downward to see where the nest had fallen.

“My children!”

Lowrie shot his head upwards. The raven stood on the fence glaring at him.

The gaze was so burning that Lowrie could see his reflection in the raven's eyes. The raven opened its beak and the witch-like cry rang out once more. "My children! Thou hast taken my children from me!"

Lowrie dropped the broom. The mother raven was speaking to him! She continued her indignant pronunciation on the boy. "Thief! Murderer! Thou hast stolen my children from me, thief!"

Lowrie felt weak under her dark, seething stare. His knees began to buckle with fear. The mother raven announced her anathema. "Because thou hast stolen my children I will require recompense at thy hand! The blood of thy siblings cries out for vengeance! Thou shalt be the recompense, Lowrie Scaper!"

***

Lowrie pulled up to a light blue duplex just beyond Del Sol Beach College. He turned the key and shut off his white Accord. Looking over at Sarah, he smiled. "I believe this is your stop."

Sarah pushed a stray strand of brown hair out of her green eyes. "That was awesome, Lowrie! You were right, that taco shop had the biggest quesadillas I've ever eaten- and BOY were they good!"

Lowrie opened his door and stepped out of his car. "I thought you might like it." He hurried around the car to the passenger door and opened it for his date. "Hole-in-the-wall taco shops like Ortega's always have the best food."

Sarah shook her head, taking off her seat belt. "You didn't have to open the door for me, Mr. Scaper. I could've opened it for myself."

Lowrie kept grinning. "I know. But I wanted to, Ms. Rivers." Lowrie glanced up and his grin disappeared, a raven observed him from the fence of the duplex.

"Always the gentleman." As Sarah leaned down to pick up her purse, Lowrie

picked a rock off the curb. He quickly chucked it at the nosy bird. The raven opened its black wings and flew into the late night.

Sarah examined where Lowrie threw the pebble and saw nothing. "Why'd you just throw the rock?"

Lowrie shut the door behind her. His eye followed the raven until it disappeared into a nearby tree. "Just scaring off that raven."

Lowrie couldn't help but feel his blood run cold at the sight of the ebony bird. Ever since that day, eight years ago, he had been fearful of the creatures. When he woke up in the hospital, hours after his fall, he asked Drew about the mother raven. Drew, now his college roommate, said he didn't hear the raven talk. He insisted Lowrie must have dreamed the whole experience with the talking bird while he was knocked out.

But the voice of the mother raven still haunted Lowrie in his dreams. The promise of her future vengeance always hung eerily in the back of his mind. The moment was too real; it had to have happened!

Sarah gave Lowrie a skeptical look. "There wasn't any raven over there." She chuckled, Lowrie leading her to her own front door. "I think you're seeing things. Going crazy." She playfully knocked on his head.

Lowrie brought himself back to the matter at hand and pushed the raven from his thoughts. He smiled. "Maybe just a little."

They arrived at Sarah's door. "You're too uptight! You need to loosen up every once in a while, Lowrie."

Lowrie nodded his head. He reprimanded himself for getting spooked by the sight of one raven. It's just a bird. He needed to focus on Sarah. The date had gone really well. He really liked her. Lowrie wasn't sure but he thought she may feel the same. "You're right."

"As usual," Sarah smirked. She lingered on the doorstep, as if she was

waiting for something. “So–I’ll see you at the beach party tomorrow?”

Lowrie felt like he needed to do something; she was sending him some kind of signal but he wasn’t sure what. Did she want him to kiss her? He was both excited and terrified at the possibility.

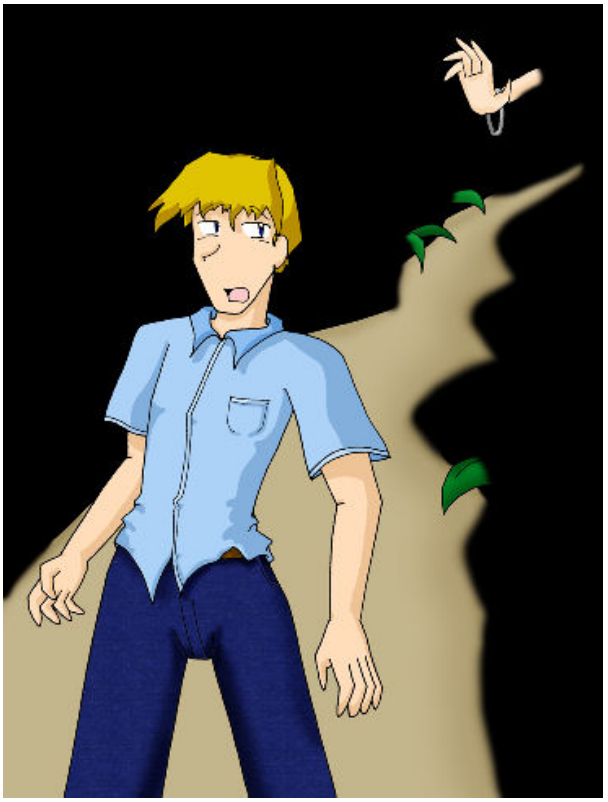
“The hour is at hand, my children! The debt will now be paid, you thief!”

Lowrie shuddered at the sound of the witch-like voice. Standing at the gutter above Sarah’s door was the Mother Raven.

“No!”

Sarah squinted. “Lowrie, what’s the matter?”

The Mother Raven pulled her hateful but triumphant gaze from Lowrie to a tree hanging over where his car was parked. Lowrie reluctantly moved his trembling view to the tree. The Mother Raven shrieked, “Now, my children! Now!”



Three small birds leaped from the tree and swooped at Lowrie; their grisly claws pointed at him. Lowrie saw into their eyes; he knew who these small, other-worldly ravens were. “Claim thy sibling! Claim him, my children!”

The world faded into the black of

night: first the stars, then the surrounding neighborhood, Lowrie's car, the tree, the duplex, then finally Sarah. "Lowrie, you're acting very strange. What i..." All that remained was Lowrie, the three ghastly little ravens, and the Mother Raven.

Lowrie tried to move, but he was impotent under the Mother raven's hot stare. The first tiny raven crashed into his chest. He felt it bore into his heart and filled it with its dark essence. He felt the bird's vengeance rush through his veins.

The second stretched forth its claws and went for Lowrie's eyes. It wrapped its cold grip around his mind, as if death itself was being woven into his being.

The third dive-bombed; its ghostly beak pierced Lowrie's throat. It seeped its way into his trachea and let out a terrible screech of victory. The sound rode up Lowrie's mouth; his lips parted and the same screech burst forth. The sound rolled through the black abyss like thunder across the plains.

The Mother Raven cackled, “Thy siblings have claimed thy coil! The privilege of mortality, of which you denied them, they shall experience through thee, my child!”

He shuddered. His sibling ravens commenced their work.

Lowrie’s blood burned through his body. The first little raven trickled into his bones; his frame shrunk, thinned, and attenuated; his hips grew, widened, and strengthened. Large muscles that ones held firm to the larger bones now hung loosely. The little ravens grasped the once bulky muscles with their claws; they pulled them snug to Lowrie’s smaller frame. His bulk surrendered to a soft delicacy.

The second little raven carefully rearranged the flow of Lowrie’s mind. His body began creating chemicals it wasn’t meant to. His butt swelled until it fit on his enlarged pelvic. His chest billowed outward, stretching his undershirt to its limits.

Lowrie groaned under the pain of his changing body. The third little raven tugged at his vocal cords. His Adam’s apple sunk into his throat. With a voice as dark as night, Lowrie cried, “What’s happening to me?”

	A feeling of vertigo overcame Lowrie; she fell to her knees, taking deep, fearful breaths.

Her short, blonde hair tumbled down her back, stopping near her tiny waist. As her bangs flopped down to her shoulders, her hair's bright blond smoldered to jet black. Slowly regaining her balance, she stood. As she did, invisible hands brushed the raven-haired beauty's tousles. Her long bangs hung to the side of her rosy face, framing it like two black wings; her mane was pulled into a long ponytail.

She stumbled back onto her feet. The oversized clothes that were draped over her salacious curves began to change. "What now?" whined Lowrie in a siren-like voice. His undershirt shrunk and softened, tightened, and wrapped itself around Lowrie's bounteous chest. The strain on her lower back left as her new bra supported the weight of her breasts. Her loose blue jeans softened into a pair of khakis. They tightened around her waist and legs, clinging to her inviting figure. Her button-on blue shirt was overcome by a violet hue. The sleeves crept up her arm until they showed off her softly sloping shoulders. The neck of her shirt, now a sleeveless polo marched downward, coming to a point. The tennis shoes she wore clamped down on her now smaller feet as the heel rose up about an inch. Then the shoes popped open; her new heeled sandals displayed her dainty feet.

Lowrie examined herself in terrified shock. She stumbled backwards muttering, "No...what...how..." She bumped into someone.

Spinning around, Lowrie found herself looking into a pair of black eyes; they weren't full of hate but of a maternal warmth (although a smirk did cross the woman's lips). The woman's hair was cut short and was just as black as Lowrie's hair, save for a few strands of gray. Her face had also given way to a few wrinkles. Standing next to each other, it was no chore to see the resemblance.

Lowrie blinked, her eyelashes stretching. Her quivering lips pursed outwards. As she looked into the older woman's black eyes, the blue in Lowrie's own

eyes deepened almost to the hue of purple. The identity of the woman escaped Lowrie's tongue. "Mother Raven."

The woman smiled. "You are now my daughter." From the pockets of her black cloak, she pulled a small metallic cylinder; with her manicured fingers she popped it open and twisted it. A deep red tube of lipstick crept outward. "Though your siblings have passed, our family will go on, Leslie Raven."

Leslie couldn't move. Mother Raven softly squeezed the cheeks of the confused paragon and her lips pressed outward. With her other hand, Mother Raven glided the brick red lipstick across Leslie's full lips. "Yes, our family will continue through you, my dear."

Mother Raven faded into the abyss. The scenery began to come back. Leslie remained motionless, too shocked to do a thing.

The apartment complex appeared before the young raven-haired girl. The doormat of Sarah's apartment rose beneath Leslie's feet, but she found herself standing where Sarah had been before.

"...uess it's time to say good night, huh?" A person other than Sarah faded into view. He was tall, muscular, had strawberry blond hair that was pushed down, and green starry eyes.

"Drew? What's going on?" Leslie took a step back. Her childhood friend and roommate was standing a little too close for her comfort, to say nothing of her confusion,

Drew wrapped his strong arms around Leslie's tiny waist. "D-Drew! Stop! W-w-what are you doing?" He pulled the beauty in, either ignoring her protests or just not hearing them.

Her body pressed against his. Leslie leaned back as Drew tilted his head towards her. "Drew! Wake up!"

Her pleas went unnoticed. Drew closed his eyes and puckered. His lips drew

closer to hers. The agonizing seconds seemed to pass by like years. Leslie's eyes grew wide with bewildered horror. Could he not hear her? How did this all just happen? Leslie had only been in this body for seconds and now her best friend was about to...

Leslie gave one desperate cry for help. "Drew don't k–"Leslie was muted by Drew's kiss.

Time froze.

Leslie felt every cell tingle with excitement. Her ankles felt weak. The world twirled before her eyes. Her heart pumped faster. Alien sensations surged through her mind. Her body resonated with titillating joy.

She desperately wanted to pull away; her brain convulsed at the indignity of the situation. She was too weak to stop Drew from doing a thing. Her body trembled in fear at the realization of her pathetic vulnerability–

Or was that just her knees buckling under the pressure of Drew's charm? She couldn't honestly decipher all the conflicting signals her brain was receiving. The feeling of his confident lips locking with her own timorous ones was exhilarating. The support of his muscular arms around her delicate waist made her feel safe. The warmth of his touch soothed her in a way the bewildered her.

Her mind slowly quieted. Her eyes shut and she unconsciously began to lean into Drew. She allowed herself to be enveloped by the passion of the moment. Despite her uncertainty, she started to reciprocate Drew's enthralling ardor.

Drew slowly withdrew his lips from Leslie's. Time moved forward once more. The world came back into focus. Still in awe of the experience, Leslie stood still in Drew's arms.

No words were exchanged. She couldn't wrest away her midnight blues from his forest greens. He was smiling like a fox that just made off with a chicken from the henhouse. Leslie blushed; the left corner of her lips slightly rose,

giving the faintest impression if a smile. She wanted to stay in his arms forever!

Drew chuckled and let loose his raven-haired girlfriend. He turned and nonchalantly trudged away to his black M3.

It panged Leslie to see him walk away. She yearned for his touch; the euphoria it left was beyond description!

He opened the door to his car. He intended only a glance, but ended up staring. Her figure so picturesque, her hair so perfect, her face so enchanting, ever her outfit showed her fashion sense was impeccable! She was absolutely captivating!

Leslie kept her eyes locked on Drew and admired his cut muscles. She pondered the feelings that stirred in her heart as she gazed at him—what did they all mean?

The wind blew and Drew shook his head. “I am one lucky man, Leslie.” She knew exactly how he felt. “I’ll see you at the beach party tomorrow. Night, babe!” He crawled into his car and drove off into the night.

As his car sped off, Leslie couldn’t help but wish that he’d turn around and whisk her away with him!

The fog of her hormones began to lift from her mind. What was she doing? What had just happened? She started putting the events of the night in order in her mind. Was she dreaming? Did any of this just happen? Was it real?

She gently pressed her finger to her lips. She examined the dark red on her soft skin. It had to be real. Whether that should cause her to panic or sing praises, she couldn't decide.

Mother Raven was real. Lowrie was her daughter. Her dead siblings now lived through her. A chill ran down her spine. She had killed them; now she was serving her sentence for her crime.

But her mind couldn't pull itself from Drew. Where her mother had turned her life upside-down, Drew had grabbed and kissed her world back into place! True, he had rearranged everything, but amid the turmoil she had just gone though he was the only thing that felt right!

Leslie opened the door to her apartment and stepped in. Her roommate, Sarah, turned from the TV and smiled. "Oh, hi Lez! You're back! Sooo–how'd your date with Drew go?"

Leslie blushed as she shut the door. "Uh–" Her mind jumped to her mother's words to her:

"Yes, our family will continue through you, my dear."

Leslie pondered those words. What did she mean by that? Continue through her? She didn't mean...

Leslie's introspection turned to the security she felt as Drew held her by her

waist. The sweet abandon she felt as they kissed. The undeniable ecstasy that flowed through her as her flawless frame pressed against his strong body. The hundreds of beats her heart skipped as they gazed into the eyes of the other... She knew exactly what Mother Raven meant. A chill went down her spine.

"Caaaw!" Leslie's eyes darted to the window as the outline of a raven flew into the pitch-black sky.

"Yes Mother."

This was the very first story I posted back on Taralynn's Desk 1.0. I don't know why it took me so long to get it reposted on Taralynn's Desk 2.0. Anyway, this was my first big effort. I was really fortunate to have Pip so willing to help promote me by drawing three different images for the story. Images help so much when telling a story.

This story had a much darker tone than I usually use. The idea came from a lot of Native American stories about the raven trickster god. I heard a few and so when I was coming up with a possible story for me to write to introduce myself to the internet, the idea of using the raven concept came to mind.

Well, tell me what you think!
Taralynn Andrews

4 thoughts on "Mother Raven"

Great Sage

January 19, 2009 at 9:59 am

Could you resize it so some of the words aren't missing? Thanks for reposting it

– I liked it.

DrGoogenGrime

January 19, 2009 at 5:25 pm

I wouldn't mind seeing a sequel or continuation.I think a cat girl wouldn't hurt.

---

tim

July 29, 2009 at 3:50 pm

great story I liked it,is this the only place you posted this story? I read something similar on another website.

Anonymoose

June 17, 2015 at 6:17 pm

It seems that the text goes off the screen and does not display properly.